

Contributed

FIVE-FOOT PHANTASMS.

By Dr. L. P. Bowen.

To scale the summits of renown,
Proud erudition all boiled down,
Armful of books which no one reads,
A hotchpotch of eccentric breeds,
Lore by the cubit, taught and won,
A made-to-order Solomon—
All boiled down!

Go measuring East, go measuring West,
By inches get the best, compressed;
With hayless tricks for making bricks,
A patent psychologick mix,
A daily fifteen-minutes' guest,
And midnight oil made a jest—
All compressed!

Rare shelf of wisdom in the regions
Of fossiliferous new religions;
How fine to take a mental canter
From Plato up to Tom O'Shanter;
The Bible skipped--Tom from his perch
Leaves old Isalah in the lurch—
Minus Church!

The five-foot spooks arise to meet us
From Woolman back to Epictetus;
Philosophers to boom and boast us,
From Changelings on to Dr. Faustus;
Poor Shakespeare versus five-foot libel,
And poor religion versus Bible—
Poor old Bible!

It's all so funny—branch and root,
The sages reckoned by the foot;
While Harvard's Pa cares not a straw
For Harvard's brag Curricula,
And great immortals drop the crown
To frisky nondescripts boiled down—
All boiled down!

MANAUS.

The Rev. W. M. Thompson.

Manaus is the capital of the State of Amazonas and has a population of about forty thousand. It is situated on the left bank of the Rio Negro (Black river) some six miles above its junction with the Solimoes and one thousand miles from the mouth of the Amazon. The Rio Negro and the Solimoes form the Amazon proper, although the Solimoes is sometimes called the Amazon, probably because it is the main stream. One wonders a little why this location was chosen for the city. I suppose it happened as in so many cases in the United States—it was not chosen, but just came to be by a kind of chance. From appearances it would seem that this was a plateau some four or five hundred feet above the river or it may have been under water and the river kept on eating and cutting until it became a series of hills and hollows. In any case, whether a plateau gradually cut into hills and hollows by erosion or the bed of the river cut down and carried away by the waters, the result is the same. The city has spent immense sums of money in cutting down and filling up and large sums will still have to be expended to make the city what it should be. Manaus is a new city. Twenty-five years ago it was not more than a village.

I was told a few days ago that ten years ago there were only two or three houses of more than one story. You would never think so now. It is really hard to believe that it was so then. The growth and progress since then have been extraordinary. Electric lights and cars were inaugurated about twelve years ago. It was ahead of any other city in the north of Brazil. Para is a much larger city, but Para has had electric cars only two years and electric lights somewhat longer. The city is having new water-works put in, rather an English company is doing it. Heretofore the water has been taken from a stream near the town, but it was small and had to be collected and was subject to surface drainage from a portion of the suburbs. Now the water is drawn from the Rio Negro above the city some distance.

Being the capital of the State, it is the point of departure for all points in the vast interior of the State, besides being an important port for ocean steamers. It has a fine harbor and the latest harbor improvements. The river is very deep and a mile or two wide, giving room for steamers of all sizes. Ocean steamers of 6,000 tons come up here any time and during six months larger ones could come. No other city north of Rio de Janeiro has as fine facilities for loading and unloading ships as this one has. This was a rather difficult problem to solve, because of the great rise and fall in the river during the rainy and dry seasons. The difference must be some forty or fifty feet from the lowest to the highest water mark. It was overcome by building two large floating piers and anchoring them out in the river beyond the low water mark. One of these is connected with the shore only by cables on which carriers run back and forth, moved by electricity, to load and unload foreign steamers. The other, which is for Brazilian steamers, is connected with the shore by a gang or road way, about one hundred yards long and fifty feet wide, down the center of which are double tracks for small cars to go up and down to load and unload the steamers. On either side of the tracks are broad walks for passengers. I should have said that these cars are also run by electricity. When the river is low this gangway becomes an inclined plane. When the river is high it rises and may get higher than the land at the point where it touches shore as was the case last June, when the river was higher than it has been for years. You had to go up about ten feet to get on the walk. Allowances were made for these changes so that everything went on as usual.

The harbor improvements have been made by the Manaus Harbor Company, Ltd., an English company. The electric lights and cars are in the hands of another English company and the water and sewerage in the power of still another English company, so I have been informed. This seems to be about the case in all the large cities of Brazil. Foreign capital is pouring into this country as never before. But I am getting off my subject. Manaus is very cosmopolitan, as might be expected. People from all parts of the world are here and from all parts of Brazil. In fact, the natives of this State are in a very small minority. Several years ago I was coming up the Amazon on an English steamer and there were eight persons at the table at which I sat. Seven nation-